

**EARLY SAINT JOHN METHODISM
AND HISTORY OF CENTENARY
METHODIST CHURCH, SAINT
JOHN, N.B. A JUBILEE SOUVENIR**

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Early Saint John Methodism and History of Centenary Methodist Church, Saint John, N.B. A
Jubilee Souvenir by George A. Henderson

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GEORGE A. HENDERSON

**EARLY SAINT JOHN METHODISM
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METHODIST CHURCH, SAINT
JOHN, N.B. A JUBILEE SOUVENIR**



REV. ENOCH WOOD, D. D.

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EARLY SAINT JOHN METHODISM
AND
HISTORY
OF
Centenary Methodist Church

SAINT JOHN, N. B.

A Jubilee Souvenir.

EDITED BY

GEO. A. HENDERSON.

*"Tell ye your children of it, and let your children tell their children,
and their children another generation."—JOB.*

SAINT JOHN, N. B. ;
PRESS OF GEO. E. DAY, GERMAIN STREET,
1890.

26,929 -
3-12-31

PREFACE.

CENTENARY CHURCH having completed its fiftieth year, a committee was appointed by the Trustee and Quarterly Boards to prepare a programme, the carrying out of which would give due recognition to that event.

The duty of preparing a paper, in which leading facts connected with the church's history should be noted, was assigned to me, coupled with the further duty of reading the same at some time during the celebration. It was soon found, however, that no matter how concisely the statements might be made, if the paper was to be at all complete, too much time would be demanded for its presentation. I was then asked to prepare an historical sketch, something in the nature of what is presented in the following pages, which, with an account of the Jubilee itself, should be published in book form as a Jubilee Souvenir. The duty having been accepted, was found to be much more arduous than anticipated. A paper, incomplete in itself, was prepared and read at one of the exercises during the Jubilee season, but further than that, in consequence of pressure of business, no attention could possibly be given to the subject for some months. After many days, I now present the result of my search, conscious of imperfection, and with no claim to literary merit, yet with a satisfaction that in a few instances I have rescued some items that soon might have been among the things forgotten.

There are many incidents in the history of a church which, for the time being, demand little attention. Years afterwards they are brought to the surface and yield an interest which it was not thought attached to them. With the itinerant system, of necessity there are many changes in the pastorate; moreover, the congregation is constantly changing. As a rule, no record is kept beyond matters of routine. It is a difficulty involving

some research to ascertain the consecutive appointments to a Methodist circuit for any considerable number of years. Few members of Centenary could supply the information, or with accuracy detail events connected with its history. If there is any importance in the preservation of these events, as to which there ought to be little doubt, it would seem that an annual record should be prepared, to be at intervals consolidated.

It has been the aim in the preparation of the following pages to bring together items which the compiler trusts may be of interest to the congregation—items which hitherto have had but a fragmentary existence, in some instances culled from books, newspapers, or old letters, in others found chiseled on tombstones, while others again are the result of personal interviews with men and women identified with the church since its opening. Perhaps undue prominence has been given to some names and incidents, while others have not received that recognition that their virtue and importance merited. This should be accounted for by the fact that the duty at all was undertaken by one whose personal knowledge of the men and things of which he has written was very limited. Of the difficulties encountered it is not necessary to make mention. The suggestion comes that had the work been undertaken before the 20th June, 1877, the result could have been more satisfactory. Records, documents and valuable data containing information of great interest to him who would search for history were by the great fire of that day reduced to ashes and forever lost. The question may be asked, Why go back of 1839? The answer is that Centenary Church did not begin with that date. A church is not the building in which the people meet, but it is the company of believers who assemble within its walls. In the year 1839 the Chapel, as it was then called, on what was known as Great George street, opened its doors to the necessities of the time, and the congregation of the old church divided, part going out from and part

remaining within the walls in which, for thirty years, the people called Methodists had worshipped, and even as before that date, so afterwards, down to the year 1867, by reason of an intermingling of interests and joint management of affairs, in a great measure the history of one is the history of the other.

In the preparation of this record I desire to acknowledge the help received from the invaluable history of "Methodism in Eastern British America," by Rev. T. Watson Smith. His work should be in every Methodist home. With the exception of what has been taken from Marsden's Narrative, Richey's Memoir of Rev. William Black, and "Humbert's Recollections," the early pages have been largely compiled from Mr. Smith's history. To that gentleman I am also indebted for many dates, circuit appointments, and other information of value. I desire also to acknowledge the help extended by Jos. W. Lawrence, Esq., whose interest in matters of this kind is manifest, and whose aid is always cheerfully given. The cut of "Old Germain Street Church" was loaned by him. To Dr. Withrow I am indebted for the cuts of Dr. Wood and "Centenary as it was." To Dr. McLeod, of Baltimore; Peter LeSueur, of Ottawa, one of the early officials of Centenary; Rev. H. Daniel, James Sullivan and R. W. Thorne, for their recollections; and to E. T. C. Knowles, for the Sunday School and Love Feast report, I thankfully acknowledge the assistance rendered.

The time spent in the preparation of these pages has been cheerfully given. My reward is a stronger attachment to my church. The work now finished was undertaken as a duty, and is, with its deficiencies, passed over to the congregation, who look upon the church somewhat with the feelings of him who wrote of Giotto's tower:

"Blossoming in stone,
A vision, a delight, and a desire,
The builder's perfect and centennial flower,
That in the night of ages bloomed alone,
But wanting still the glory of the spire."

G. A. H.

MINISTERS STATIONED AT ST. JOHN PRIOR TO OPENING OF
CENTENARY CHURCH.

- 1791—ABRAHAM J. BISHOP.
1794—WILLIAM JESSOP.
1795—DANIEL FIDLER.
* 1801—JAMES MANN, THOMAS OLIVANT.
1802—JOSHUA MARSDEN.
1803—WILLIAM BENNETT.
1804—JOSHUA MARSDEN.
1808—WILLIAM BENNETT.
1809—WILLIAM BLACK.
1811—STEPHEN BAMFORD.
1813—JAMES KNOWLAN.
1815—WILLIAM CROSCOMBE.
1817—STEPHEN BAMFORD.
1819—JAMES PRIESTLY.
1821—ROBERT ALDER.
1823—JAMES PRIESTLY.
1824—ROBERT ALDER.
1826—RICHARD WILLIAMS.
1828—RICHARD WILLIAMS, ENOCH WOOD.
1829—JOHN BASS STRONG, ENOCH WOOD.
1830—JOHN B. STRONG, ALBERT DESBRISAY.
1831—ALBERT DESBRISAY, J. B. STRONG, SAMUEL JOLL.
1832—ALBERT DESBRISAY, SAMUEL JOLL.
1833—SAMPSON BUSBY, WILLIAM SMITHSON.
1835—SAMPSON BUSBY, ARTHUR McNUTT.
1836—ENOCH WOOD, ARTHUR McNUTT.
1837—ENOCH WOOD, RICHARD SHEPARD.

* In other years the circuit, which covered a great part of the province, was visited by two or three ministers in the course of a year. The list of these comprised Duncan McGill, James Mann, William Earley, James Boyd and William Grandin.

MINISTERS TO ST. JOHN SOUTH CIRCUIT.

- 1839—RICHARD WILLIAMS, *FREDERICK SMALLWOOD.
1840—WILLIAM TEMPLE, *F. SMALLWOOD.
1841—WM. TEMPLE, *S. D. RICE, HUMPHREY PICKARD.
1842—WM. TEMPLE, *ENOCH WOOD, WM. ALLEN.
1843—*ENOCH WOOD, GEORGE MILLER, DAVID JENNINGS.
1844—*ENOCH WOOD, GEORGE MILLER.
1845—*ENOCH WOOD, GEORGE MILLER, F. SMALLWOOD.
1846—HENRY DANIEL, *INGHAM SUTCLIFFE.
1849—RICHARD KNIGHT, *ROBERT COONEY.
1852—RICHARD KNIGHT, *JOHN ALLISON.
1853—JAMES G. HENNIGAR, *WM. T. CARDY.
1854—JAS. G. HENNIGAR, *W. T. CARDY, GEO. B. PAYSON.
1855—JAS. G. HENNIGAR, *W. T. CARDY, CHAS. STEWART.
1856—E. BOTTERILL, *T. M. ALBRIGHTON, C. STEWART.
1858—E. BOTTERILL, *WM. WILSON, T. M. ALBRIGHTON.
1859—J. McMURRAY, *WM. WILSON, JOHN LATHERN.
1860—J. McMURRAY, *WM. WILSON, J. R. NARRAWAY.
1861—J. McMURRAY, *M. RICHEY, D. D., JOHN LATHERN.
1862—M. RICHEY, D. D., *J. R. NARRAWAY, A. W. NICHOLSON.
1864—JOHN S. ADDY, *J. R. NARRAWAY, JOHN BREWSTER.
1865—JOHN S. ADDY, *J. R. NARRAWAY, J. L. SPONAGLE.
1866—JOHN S. ADDY, *JAMES ENGLAND, J. L. SPONAGLE.

MINISTERS TO CENTENARY CIRCUIT.

- 1867—JAMES ENGLAND.
1868—JOHN LATHERN.
1871—DUNCAN D. CURRIE.
1873—HENRY POPE.
1876—HOWARD SPRAGUE.
1878—HOWARD SPRAGUE, MATTHEW R. KNIGHT.
1879—JOSEPH HART.
1880—D. D. CURRIE.
1883—WILLIAM DOBSON.
1886—WALDRON W. BREWER.
1889—EDWIN EVANS.

* These had the pastoral oversight of the Centenary congregation.